

REMARKS

Claim Status:

Claims 15 to 24 are pending. Claims 1 to 14 and 18 are cancelled and claims 25 to 42 are withdrawn.

Obviousness Rejections:

The Examiner rejected independent claim 15 (and all claims depending therefrom) as being obvious over Carpenter.

Claim 15 has now been amended as to set forth the plurality of bands extending from opposite lateral regions being juxtaposed to pass between one another.

This feature of the invention is described in the specification at pages 5 and 11 and is clearly seen in Fig. 1 where bands 20, 22, 24 and 26 are juxtaposed with bands 21, 23, 25 and 27 such that band 20 passes between bands 21 and 23; band 23 passes between bands 20 and 22; band 22 passes between bands 23 and 25, etc. when the device is wrapped around the patient's limb.

A unique advantage of having the bands juxtaposed, as claimed, is that it is particularly easy for the patient to simply grab onto one band from each of the opposing sides and pull them at the same time, thus easily tightening the device, as it is being wrapped around the patient's limb. For example, the patient could start by first tightening bands 20 and 21. When finished, (s)he could then simultaneously tighten bands 22 and 23, etc.

By simultaneously pulling on bands extending from opposite edges of the device, a desired tightness can easily be achieved. Moreover, such tightening by simultaneous pulling on bands extending from opposite sides of the device prevents the device from rotating around the patient's limb.

A second advantage of the presently claimed bands being juxtaposed is that each of the opposing bands can be fastened directly to the flat central region of the device. For example, the

Velcro ends of each of bands 20 to 27 (e.g.: Velcro end #75 on band 23) can be positioned onto central region 10. This is possible because each of bands 20 to 27 are juxtaposed to pass between one another.

In contrast, the various embodiments of the Carpenter system do not have opposing bands that are juxtaposed to pass between one another, as claimed. Instead, Carpenter's opposing bands simply extend directly outwardly and interlock with one another. This is seen clearly in Carpenter's Figs. 15, 16 and 18. As can be seen, the opposing bands are locked together by fastening one band to another (as shown in Figs 17 and 19). This is fundamentally different from the presently claimed invention in which each of the bands pass between one another such that they can be directly fastened to the flat central region of the device.

In view of the forgoing amendment and remarks, the Applicants respectfully request that the present obviousness rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion:

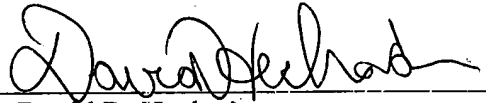
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The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned if there are any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

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